

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated April 21, 2008, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 1-13 are rejected by the Examiner. With this response, claims 1, 10 and 12 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-13 remain pending in this application.

In Office Action, the amendment filed 2/11/08 is objected to under 35 U.S.C. 132(a) because it introduces new matter into the disclosure. In view of claims as presently amended, applicant respectfully traverses this objection.

In Office Action, claims 1-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In view of claims as presently amended, applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

In the Office Action, claims 1-4 and 6-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,403,616 to Hattori et al. (hereinafter “Hattori”) in combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,755,127 to Miyahara et al. (hereinafter “Miyahara”). Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hattori in combination with Miyahara further in combination with Applicant’s admitted related art.

The rejection of claims 1-4 and 6-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hattori in combination with Miyahara is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested.

Claim 1 is allowable at least in that this claim recites a combination of elements, including, for example, “the master is separated from the substrate at a distance during filling the resist in opening of the mater.” None of the cited references, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner acknowledges that Hattori “fails to teach a master being separately formed and separable from the substrate. In addition, the use of a doctor blade to planarize the resist coating.” See Office Action, lines 6-7 page 4.

The Examiner cites Miyahara as allegedly teaching “a screen printing method whereby a master plate (12) is displace above the substrate (3) and is contacted with a squeegee head (13) to contact the mask plate (12) and the substrate (3) thereby applying pattern to thee substrate (3)

through the mask plate(12). The mask plate (12) is then released back to a position above the substrate (3)." See Office Action, lines 8-11, page 4.

As motivation for curing the deficiency of Hattori with Miyahara, the Examiner states, "It would have been obvious for one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified Hattori et al (5,403,127) process by substituting a "displaced mask" as evidenced by Miyahara et al. (6,755,127) for the mask of Hattori et al. (5,403,616) with the expectation of achieving similar success." See Office Action, lines 13-16 and 7-9 page 4.

Applicants respectfully disagrees that Miyahara cure the deficiency of Hattori. In the claimed invention, the master is separated from the substrate at the beginning of the filing process of the resist into the opening of the mask and then the master is continuously separated from the substrate during filing the resist into opening of the master. That is, in the claimed invention, the master is separated from the substrate for the whole period of filing the resist in the opening of the master.

On the contrary to the claimed invention, Miyahara does not show "the master is separated from the substrate for the whole period of filing the resist in the opening of the master."

Miyahara disclosed "as shown in FIG. 4(c), substrate holder 2 moves up and one clampers 4 is abutted on the bottom surface of mask plate 12 just under squeegee head 13. In this state of operation, motor 28 is operated, and as shown in FIG. 4(d), the squeegee head 13 horizontally moves on the mask plate 12 being supported on the upper surface of clamper 4. It is possible to horizontally move the squeegee head 13 in an optional position on the mask plate 12. Preferably, the squeegee head 13 is horizontally moved on the mask plate 12 being stably supported, for example, on the surface of clamper 4." See lines 53-63 Column 7.

That is, in the Miyahara, the substrate holder holding the substrate is contacted with the bottom surface of the mask plate during the printing process. Thus, Miyahara does not show "the master is separated from the substrate for the whole period of filing the resist in the opening of the master."

Thus, the cited references fail to teach or suggest at least "the master is separated from the substrate at a distance during filling the resist in opening of the mater."

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is allowable over the cited references.

Claims 2-4 and 6-9 are allowable at least by virtue of the fact that they depend from claim 1, which is allowable.

Claim 10 is allowable at least in that this claim recites a combination of elements, including, for example, “the master is separated from the substrate at a distance during filling the resist in opening of the mater.” None of the cited references, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 10 for the same reasons as claim 1. Applicants’ arguments with respect to claim 1 are equally applicable to claims 10, and Applicants respectfully submit that claims 10 are allowable over the cited references for the same reasons given for claim 1 above.

Claim 11 is allowable at least by virtue of the fact that they depend from claim 10, which is allowable.

Claim 12 is allowable at least in that this claim recites a combination of elements, including, for example, “the master is separated from the substrate at a distance during filling the resist in opening of the mater.” None of the cited references, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 12 for the same reasons as claim 1. Applicants’ arguments with respect to claim 1 are equally applicable to claims 12, and Applicants respectfully submit that claims 12 are allowable over the cited references for the same reasons given for claim 1 above.

Claim 13 is allowable at least by virtue of the fact that they depend from claim 12, which is allowable.

The rejection of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hattori in combination with Hattori further in combination with Applicant’s admitted state of the art. is respectfully traversed and reconsideration is requested. Claim 5 is allowable at least by virtue of the fact that they depend from claim 1, which is allowable.

Applicants believe the application is in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Dated: 21 July 2008

Respectfully submitted,

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